

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

Editorial Opinions of the Leading Journals Upon Current Topics—Compiled Every Day for the Evening Telegraph.

THE NEGRO AS A JUROR.

From the Pittsburg Courier.

"Negro on the brain" was formerly considered as a dangerous and very troublesome malady among us. The person thus afflicted was supposed to be quite disqualified for exercising a sound judgment in regard to many subjects of great practical importance.

Though the disease has disappeared, except a sporadic case here and there, the memory of its disagreeable symptoms is still fresh, and perhaps exerts an influence unfavorable to a dispassionate and impartial consideration of the class whose claims once gave rise to such morbid effects in their advocates.

But these colored people in great numbers form a part of our compatriots; their condition in the future is a matter that forces itself upon the attention of the present, and there is no wisdom in refusing to look at the subject because it may happen to be unpleasant or because we may think that too much has been made of it in the past.

Though the civil relations of these people concern the South more than the North, and though there is good reason to believe that many of those among us will gradually seek a warmer climate, still, many of them will remain here, and a long time must elapse before our population will be left quite without an African element.

Hence, on several grounds, we of the North watch and ought to watch with a keen spirit of inquiry the social processes of settlement and arrangement of the two races now going on in the late States.

The subject is one of considerable theoretical as well as practical interest, and it is not improbable that in time to come the results of the vast experiment proceeding in those regions will be referred to as illustrating some of the most obscure problems in ethnology.

In view of these considerations and others that might be mentioned, the following extract from the Florida Banner of the 13th of November will be read with general satisfaction. It is a portion of a charge delivered to the Grand Jury of Marion county by Judge Goss:

"The doubt with our people was, whether the testimony as jurors would be according to the acts—would ever convict one of their own race of crime, particularly of larceny or a crime against the whites. During the former sittings of the court in the five counties, there had been a multitude of offenders put upon trial before mixed juries, and in some instances of black men exclusively. A very large majority of such offenders have been black men on trial for offenses against white men, and upon the property of white men. In almost every instance, certainly in a majority of cases, where the evidence was clear and conclusive, the jury has found the prisoner guilty. Of the twenty or thirty convictions obtained at the former sittings of this court, very few have been black men convicted of offenses against white men, and convicted by black. A mixed jury in such cases is almost sure to arrive at a just conclusion."

We have assumed that this statement will be read with general satisfaction, because we suppose there are few who will regret to see their own sinister or dependent anticipations in such a matter falsified by facts. It is another instance added to the multitude known before, which show that, in regard to races of mankind as well as distinct classes of society, charitable judgments are usually the soundest, and that the spirit of sweeping condemnation is as foolish as it is wicked.

In the days before the war, the negro in the North was an object of contempt to one sort of people and an object of compassion to another sort. Cities and neighborhoods could be mentioned in which a considerable number of persons concerned themselves about him, and had come to conclusions favorable upon the whole to the African character.

These benevolent inquirers were generally Quakers, and their friendly theories were not allowed to remain mere theories. They became facts in the form of schools, reading-rooms, and other institutions, by the use of which prosperous, or at least comfortable African communities were enabled to show, on a small scale, their susceptibility of civilization. The Quaker testimony regarding their noble proteges was, that they were fairly intelligent and more than fairly thankful for kindnesses received.

antique. The objection, however, which would arise upon even a cursory perusal of this fragrant sheet would be that it is too potent and too pungent for human nature's daily nose. It is, in fact, a chemical curiosity of a newspaper, as we shall presently demonstrate, and it is the only one which we have ever seen which, by the mysterious law of association, reminded us of a bone-boiling establishment in the fulness of its fragrance.

We may as well, in the very outset, acknowledge that this publication professes to be "Republican" in its politics, from which the inference may be drawn, to our disadvantage, that it is as necessary for a Republican to be as dirty in Louisiana as "a Democrat" in New York. Only promising that the editor of this topographical bouquet is a member of Congress, we proceed to an analysis of his odoriferous manufactures.

For some reason—we do not care what, for it would be time wasted to conjecture it—there is not merely war to the knife, but war to the bullet, the bludgeon, and the spitting of venom, between the *Homer* and another newspaper called the *Clairborne Advocate*. Hostilities thus far, we believe, are confined to a brisk interchange of epithets and the small shot of vituperation—we would say billingsgate, only the poor fish-wives have already grown clean-mouthed, by comparison, in our estimation.

"Allen C. Hill," says the *Advocate*, "the hefty goose of the *Advocate*, displays in his dirty sputterings continued unrepentantness in regard to education." "He fears," adds his enemy, "that the colored people may learn to read and write."

These are fears that we confess we should share with Mr. A. C. Hill, if the educated black could avail himself of no better reading than the newspaper before us, and could not write more decently than its editors. We do not want the freedmen of Louisiana to be taught chirography merely that ink may be wasted and clean white paper worse than spoiled—that they may, in print, call each other "buzzards," "bottle-bellied toads," "skunks," "wild bulls," "big hogs," and "brutish, hare-brained, puling dogs."

These are all zoological titles which the ingenious Blackburn lavishes upon his foe. There is nothing particularly original about them—they are specimens of rather a hackneyed style of scolding. Heaven help the negroes if they are to take their primary lessons in "civilization" and refinement from such an educator and champion! That we may be thoroughly understood, we transfer one gem entire:

"The Naaman of the *Advocate* speaks of Naam. Now, Naaman of old was a mighty man in Syria, but he was a leper. So with the Naaman of the *Clairborne*—yes, a mighty man—but he is very filthy. And yet he speaks of Naam. And why need he fear that? One would not survive on his scolding surface longer than would a gnat in the crater of Mount Vesuvius!"

—A whole broadside of stuff like this appears in a journal which professes to be devoted not only to "Politics and News," but to "Civilization and Literature." If Louisiana is to have no nobler aid in her struggle for regeneration and reconstruction, her case is a colorless one indeed. This ill-bred and undervaluing newspaper, as we learn from an announcement in the van of its columns, is "The Official Journal of the United States," as it is of "the State of Louisiana and the Parish of Clairborne." If the General Government is in any way responsible for this weekly compost of vulgarity and abuse, we pray the General Government, for its own sake, as well as for the sake of the Republican party, straightway to wash its hands of the responsibility. If we cannot maintain the peace and dignity of the Union in Louisiana without such an utter degradation of the Republican press as this *Homer* and *Advocate* would endeavor to talk at least of the dignity. This kind of newspaper was common enough at the South before the Rebellion; was the continued breeder of personal encounters, of fights in the streets and of fights in the bar-room, of wayside assassinations and all manner of bloody and desperate deeds. Ultimately they were the ill-omened birds brooding over the egg of treason until they hatched it into spasmodic, but most mischievous life. If now, when the war is over, our only hope of future peace is in the social regeneration of the South, why should a paper calling itself "Republican" and "the official journal of the United States" be thus permitted to bring disrespect upon the national flag, and to hinder the work of reconstruction, while it undertakes to advance it? The editor professes to be a genuine Southern Unionist. Of men with this high claim to consideration we have never failed to speak in defense, whenever we have thought them unjustly or ungenerously treated; but a newspaper like this "Republican" journal of Louisiana does more to silence us than all the logic of the copperheads and all the lamentations of the unconstructed.

THE PHILADELPHIA LEAGUE.

Philadelphia has a poet and a league. We have half a dozen poets, and a League too. But our league is an humble, modest league at the corner of a thoroughfare, and hardly distinguishable from other homes. The Philadelphia league, besides being, we believe, the mother league, just as Philadelphia at once had, *about* *avenue*, a mother bank, is the institution of the city. It is, in the sense of the venerable Bede's saying, Philadelphia's colossus, and the Quaker community would fall without it. It is the architectural gem; and, though a little squat in its appearance by the side of the neighboring houses, it is really quite a fine edifice. Of its interior, it is not for the like of us to judge. All that we know of its secrets we glean from the showy and eloquent reports which from time to time are given to the world. One has just appeared. Here it is that Philadelphia's solitary post comes into action. He is the secretary—the Charles Thomson of the league. He writes what the loyal thunders utter; and he writes very well; and in the annual report just out, printed in the Philadelphia papers, he has sketched with a master's and poet's hand the triumphs of radicalism and the league, and the blessed state of the country from Minnesota to Georgia. It does one good to read it. It almost makes us forget the public debt and the income tax. Its panegyric on General Grant (and no one has more cause to praise him than Mr. Boker) is the more earnest because there is a very clear intimation that the leaguers were a little distrustful of him, and never felt entirely happy till he appointed Sickles (an honored and frequent guest), and Borie and Robinson (both members) in succession to office. That some Mr. Boker said or sang *Nunc dimittis*, and, if we are not mistaken, the prayer has been pretty effectually granted.

But peace, as another poet has justly said, has its victories as well as war, and we learn that the Philadelphia league has recently gained one for which we are grateful.

We give the passage in the report as we find it, with its unctuous praise of Grant, who still has offices to bestow, and its spiteful fling at Johnson, who has none; the nearly fatal miscarriage of a letter from the Post-

master-General himself; and the concluding passage, in true poetic vein, of Old Hickory dancing and stamping among the fires of nullification—simply remarking that if any one had called General Jackson a "loyalist" to his face, he would certainly have been knocked down.

"In the early part of the summer a single point of public interest invited and received the attention of the board. The banishment of the heads of Washington and Jackson from the postage stamps most in use, and the remarkable exhibition of the representations of a locomotive engine and a mounted post-boy in their places, had been publicly criticized to his face, as we have the satisfaction to remember. Grant had taken no part. The new stamps had been prepared by the contractors under President Johnson. A committee was appointed to compare the new stamps with those of the old, and its suggestion carefully considered. We have reason to suppose that our views coincided with those of the committee, and we have the satisfaction to learn that new designs are now in preparation, and five profile and five full-face heads of Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Jackson, and Lincoln are to be substituted for the ten denominated of stamps, and that the present stamps are to be withdrawn as soon as possible. It will be a source of satisfaction to us if the action of the board will be to contribute to a result which all loyal men will welcome, and that the effigies of the Father of his Country, and of the stout-hearted loyalist who, in his life, stamped the name of Union on his flag, again be restored to their places of honor in the postal service of the Union."

Still we are grateful, and hope the league will continue to employ its elegant leisure in works of kindred benevolence; regretting very much for *several* *amalgam*—to learn that its members are rapidly diminishing and its library very slowly increasing. The report winds up with a fervent and emphatic assertion of State rights in their broadest sense; which, being interpreted, means more protection for Pennsylvania's coal and iron.

LET THE LOAD BE LIGHTENED!

From the N. Y. Times.

We published on Saturday a portion of the testimony which the press is teeming in favor of an immediate and large reduction of taxation. On no subject is public opinion more decided, and on none is the press of the country more emphatic or united. These expressions of judgment and feeling are rendered more significant by the fact that they are called forth by the proposal of the President to maintain the present rate of taxation until the debt shall have been funded at a lower rate of interest, and by the apparent indisposition of the Secretary of the Treasury to grant relief until his policy be further advanced. They are virtually a protest against the views of the administration in this respect. They are a warning that the country will not consent to be taxed in with impunity, and an indication of the demand urged by the people with a firmness which Congress cannot wisely resist.

Now can it be pretended that the protest or the demand emanates from political opponents alone, or is designed in any manner to embarrass the action of the Government. We have purposely culled the testimony we adduce from journals decidedly friendly to General Grant and his administration, or from journals whose independent attitude removes them from factions fellowship with the opposition. When staunch and influential Republicans like the *Boston Advertiser*, the *Albany Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Lawrence Journalist* insist that the position assumed in the message and the Treasury report must be abandoned, and that, in advance of all other reforms, the taxes must be reduced, we may safely conclude that the current of Republican feeling runs strongly in the direction which the *Times* has ventured again and again to indicate. If the business men who care little for mere partisanship were consulted, we are sure that ninety-nine hundredths of them would be found to cherish the same opinion. They may differ in reference to gold sales, or the currency, or the tariff, but they are agreed in the demand for a reduction of the tax burden. The "off taxes" is the all but universal cry among those engaged in productive industry, and in all trade, foreign or domestic. To this cry Congress ought not to be indifferent.

The demand derives additional strength from its reasonableness and justice. It does not involve weakness or inconvenience to the Government, damage to the public credit, or loss to any important interest. While the war lasted, the most onerous taxation was borne cheerfully; and if to-day there were an actual necessity for its continuance, it would be submitted to ungrudgingly. But there is neither financial wisdom nor equity in keeping up war taxation years after peace has been restored. On the contrary, there is folly as well as wrong in the attempt to perpetuate excessive burdens for the redemption of bonds long in advance of their maturity, or for the carrying out of any financial theory which the Secretary may have formed, predicated upon possible funding in the future, or any similar contingency. For funding is at best a remote contingency. It may be applied under pressure to the extent of the bonds deposited by the national banks; but otherwise, it will be impracticable until after the resumption of specie payments—and that, as most of us know, requires much patient waiting.

We object, then, to the continuance of the present taxation during a period which must elapse before resumption or funding can be effected. The country cannot sustain the load, and neither the public credit nor the exigencies of the public service require it. The administration prides itself on its measures of retrenchment, and Congress professes a desire to promote it. But the prime purpose of retrenchment is relief to the people; and the only practical shape which relief can take is the largest possible reduction of taxes. Will Congress or the administration assume the responsibility which denial of this relief will assuredly entail?

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

CHRISTMAS DINNER TO THE POOR.

The teachers of the Sabbath and Day Schools of the Bedford Street Mission intend giving a dinner, on CHRISTMAS DAY, to the scholars under their care, at the MESSON HOUSE, No. 617 BEDFORD STREET, between 12 and 1 o'clock.

Interested exercises in the school, before dinner, by the children. The citizens are cordially invited to be present.

Donations, either in money, poultry, provisions, or clothing, respectfully solicited, and can be sent to either of the undersigned:

EDMUND S. YARD, No. 29 Spruce street, JACOB H. RUDSALL, No. 11 Chestnut street, GEORGE MILLIKEN, No. 63 Arch street, JAMES L. BISHOP, No. 719 S. Second street, WILLIAM H. H. FISKE, North and Market streets, CHARLES SPENCER, No. 7 Pine street, Rev. JOHN D. LONG, No. 613 Bedford street.

FARMERS' AND MECHANICS' NATIONAL BANK.

Philadelphia, Dec. 16, 1869. The Annual Election for Directors of this Bank will be held at the Banking House on WEDNESDAY, the 15th day of January, 1870, between the hours of 11 o'clock A. M. and 2 o'clock P. M.

THE COMMERCIAL NATIONAL BANK OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Philadelphia, Dec. 11, 1869. The Annual Election for Directors of this Bank will be held at the Banking House on WEDNESDAY, the 15th day of January, 1870, between the hours of 11 o'clock A. M. and 2 o'clock P. M.

SOUTHWARK NATIONAL BANK.

Philadelphia, December 11, 1869. The Annual Election for Directors of this Bank will be held at the Banking House on TUESDAY, January 11, 1870, between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 1 o'clock P. M.

CAMBRIA IRON COMPANY.—THE Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of the CAMBRIA IRON COMPANY will be held at their office, No. 40 South Third Street, Philadelphia, on THURSDAY, the 18th day of January next, at 4 o'clock P. M., when an election will be held for Seven Directors, to serve for the ensuing year.

STEREOPTICON AND MAGIC LANTERN EXHIBITIONS take place Sunday Schools, Schools, Colleges, and for private entertainments, at the office of the proprietor, No. 725 CHESTNUT STREET, second story.

OFFICE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD COMPANY, TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT.

Philadelphia, Nov. 4, 1869. NOTICE TO STOCKHOLDERS.

The Board of Directors have this day declared a semi-annual dividend of FIVE PER CENT. on the Capital Stock of the Company, clear of National and State taxes, payable in cash on November 3, 1869.

THE MAHANOY RAILROAD COMPANY.

Philadelphia, Dec. 16, 1869. The Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of this Company will be held at the office of the Company on MONDAY, January 10, 1870, at 2 o'clock P. M.

COLD WEATHER DOES NOT CHAP.

DR. F. R. THOMAS, THE LATE OPERATOR of the Colton Dental Association, is now the only Philadelphia who devotes his entire time and practice to extracting teeth, absolutely without pain, by fresh nitrous oxide gas.

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